**Thunder Bay Police Services’ Citizen Satisfaction Survey 2018:**

**Similarities and Differences between two sample groups of respondents**

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**Executive Summary**

The Thunder Bay Police Service (TBPS) conducts a biennial Citizen Satisfaction Survey (CSS) to gauge citizens’ satisfaction with its services and inform its planning [1]. In fall 2018, TBPS Senior Managers and Dr. Leisa Desmoulins (Lakehead University) re-designed the CSS (2018) to gain broader insights into citizens’ experiences and perceptions of the TBPS. This pilot study sought to: 1. attract non-typical respondents by adding an in-person format to the survey; 2. add trust and confidence statements to augment data on satisfaction; and 3. refine demographic data to discern variances amongst respondents, if any. This report compares online and in-person respondents for demographic differences, experiences, and results on trust and confidence and then makes recommendations to the TBPS for next steps to follow-up the CSS (2018) re-design.

Desmoulins gained approval from Lakehead University’s Research Ethics Board for the survey. Then the TBPS advertised its CSS (2018) through local and regional media sites [2]. Desmoulins developed and conducted online surveys using Survey Monkey software. Next, she trained graduate students to conduct in-person surveys. Both survey formats used the same questions, in the same order, and was open during the same time period (December 5-19, 2018).

In total, 2250 citizens responded to online (N= 2038) and in-person (N=212) formats of the 2018 CSS. To compare these two CSS samples, which have diverse numbers of respondents (2038 versus 212), results are shown in percentages throughout this report. The samples differed demographically. Online respondents identified mostly as white (76%) with few Indigenous respondents (9%). In-person respondents identified as white (46%) and Indigenous (43%). Online respondents were 35 years and older (75%): in-person were 35 years and younger (53%).

Key findings show strong similarities and stark differences between online and in-person respondents. Respondents showed several similarities, they:

* Had contact with TBPS in the past year at similar percentages (57% online; 55% in-person)
* During this contact with TBPS, they were treated with respect (80% online; 80% in-person)
* Perceived Thunder Bay to be somewhat safe overall (39% online; 31% in-person).

Significantly, over three quarters of respondents from both samples reported being treated with respect during their contact with officers and staff of the TBPS within the previous year.

Yet, online and in-person respondents also showed differences in trust and confidence:

* Nearly half of online respondents (47%) strongly agreed that TBPS is sensitive to the needs of MY group: less than one quarter of in-person respondents strongly agreed
* Slightly over half (52%) of online respondents perceive that TBPS does a good job of treating people fairly: slightly under a fifth of in-person respondents (19%) perceive that TBPS does a good job
* Over half of online respondents (56%) had a great deal of confidence in the TBPS: less than a quarter (23%) of in-person respondents had a great deal of confidence in the TBPS

Notably, in-person respondents expressed lower trust and confidence, by a difference of 33 percentage points than online respondents for treating people fairly.

In sum, the CSS (2018) attracted younger and more racialized respondents via in-person surveying, added trust and confidence statements, and found variances amongst online and in-person respondents. The differences in findings may be attributed to demographics; however, this hypothesis needs further study beyond the CSS (2018) pilot testing. Given the key findings, researchers recommend that the TBPS:

1. Consult with racialized youth about ways for the TBPS to build trust with them

2. Repeat the CSS in 2019, seeking a larger sample of diverse in-person respondents

3. Reach out to organizations to advertise the CSS to gain a more representative sample of respondents to the online survey—in -person surveys are expensive and time consuming.

**Background to the TBPS 2018 citizen satisfaction survey design**

       The Thunder Bay Police Service (TBPS) conducted its Citizen Satisfaction Survey (CSS) recently in 2014 and 2016. Survey respondents completed an online survey that asked about their experiences with TBPS and satisfaction with the TBPS’ services [1].

However, a review of the TBPS’ most recent satisfaction surveys (2014, 2016) showed that respondents did not reflect the demographic diversity of Thunder Bay. Notably, recent CSS respondents mainly identified as white (91%; 90%), with few respondents identifying as Indigenous (6%; 7%) in 2014 and 2016 respectively. The most recent Census (2016) shows 13% of Thunder Bay’s citizens identified as Indigenous, a city with the highest population (per capita) of Indigenous peoples in the country [3]. As well, the age ranges on the CSS (2014, 2016) were too large to discern if they reflected the broader population, particularly youth [4].

A year earlier TBPS representatives (then A/Chief Sylvie Hauth and Director of Communications, Chris Adams) met with representatives from the Regina Police Service (RPS). They indicated that Indigenous respondents had been under-represented in the RPS surveys. Five years earlier, RPS conducted in-person surveys to complement its usual format to attract more Indigenous respondents [5]. TBPS followed the RPS method and used in-person surveys to attract non-traditional respondents for the 2018 CSS.

Also, the TPS elected to pilot a section on trust and confidence for the 2018 CSS, following other police services [6]. Adding trust and confidence questions gives feedback beyond satisfaction because “trust extends beyond public perceptions that police perform their duties effectively (i.e. satisfaction) to include a sense that police make decisions fairly and treat people fairly” [7]. Thus, TBPS made three changes to the 2018 survey:

1.     Added trust and confidence questions from other surveys [8]

2.     Piloted an in-person format of the CSS to complement online data collection

3.     Reduced tyears within age range (i.e. 18-24, 25-30, 35-44, 45-54, 65-74, 75+).

## **Methods**

Desmoulins gained approval from the Research Ethics Board (REB) at Lakehead University to conduct the CSS survey to citizens (18 years and older). She advertised for graduate student researchers in the Faculty of Education at Lakehead University for in-person data collection. She hired and trained five research assistants to conduct in-person surveys. Three research assistants were from Indigenous and other racialized groups.

The TBPS announced the CSS (2018) to Thunder Bay’s citizens on its website and social media, and through external sources—print and broadcast media, and social media outlets [2]. The online and in-person survey formats asked the same questions, in the same order, and was open during the same time period (December 5 to 19, 2018). After it closed, researchers removed disqualified respondents [9]. In total, 2250 respondents completed the survey; 2038 respondents completed the CSS online and 212 completed it in-person.

## **Contexts and limitations of the 2018 CSS**

Researchers strive for constant conditions while conducting surveys. For the 2018 CSS, several events happened between December 5th to 19th, while the survey was open:

1. On December 6, 2018, the TBPS reported Braiden Jacob, a First Nations youth, missing. Tragically, his body was found four days later. TBPS investigators ruled his death a homicide. The TBPS later charged a man with his death [10].
2. On December 12, 2018, the Office of the Independent Police Review Director (OIPRD), G. McNeilly, released his report, *Broken Trust*, which found that systemic racism exists in TBPS at an institutional level [11].
3. The next day, M. Sinclair released his report on the Board’s oversight of the TBPS on behalf of the Ontario Civilian Police Commission (OCPC). He re-iterated, “systemic discrimination exists in policing in Thunder Bay” [12].

These events affected many within the community of Thunder Bay: they may have affected survey respondents’ answers differently than those who took the survey earlier.

**Key Findings**

Key findings compare responses from online and in-person respondents to the CSS 2018 on three aspects of the survey: 1. demographics, 2. similarities, and 3. differences.

**Demographics**

Online and in-person respondents shared demographic data on racial identity and age.

*Chart 1: Racial identity*



Online respondents (76%) identified predominantly as White. In-person respondents also identified most often as White (46%), by less than 30 percentage points than their online peers. This was followed closely by in-person respondents identifying as Indigenous (43%) by more than 30 percentage points than their online peers (9%). For this report, respondents that identified as First Nations, Metis, and Inuit have been added together under the heading “Indigenous” respondents. Very few respondents identified as Asian, Black, Hispanic, or Other (5% online; 9% in-person). Researchers grouped them together under the heading Other respondents. Notably, 10% of online respondents skipped the question and 2% of in-person respondents gave no response or did not know.

**Age Groupings**

Respondents chose from seven age ranges (see Figure 1 below). The researchers removed data from respondents that identified as <18 years, a requirement of the REB approval. The figure and chart below show the age groupings and trends respectively.

*Figure 1: Age groupings\**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ANSWER CHOICES | ONLINE RESPONSE | IN-PERSON RESPONSE |
| 18 – 24 years | 2.75% | **22.64%** |
| 25 – 34 years | 12.02% | 21.23% |
| 35 – 44 years | 15.06% | 17.92% |
| 45 – 54 years | 17.76% | 17.45% |
| 55 – 64 years | **23.90%** | 10.85% |
| 65 – 74 years | 14.72% | 4.72% |
| 75+ years | 3.97% | 2.36% |
| No Response | 9.62% | 2.83% |

\*Total percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

Figure 1 above shows that the greatest percentage of online respondents identified as 55-64 years (24%). Conversely, the greatest percentage of in-person respondents identified as 18-24 years (23%).

*Chart 2: Age Trends*



Chart 2 above shows that age trends for online and in-person respondents differed, with online respondents generally older (three quarters older than age 35) and in-person respondents younger (half younger than age 35). Notably, 10% of respondents from the online survey skipped the question and 3% of in-person respondents gave no response or did not know.

**B. Similarities**

The next three charts show similarities for 1. contact with TBPS, 2. if respondents were treated with respect during their contact with TBPS, and 3. perceptions of safety.

*Chart 3: Contat with Thunder Bay Police Service*

Contact included calling 911, talking with a police officer on the street, at home or place of work, going to the police station, charged by an officer, encountered a RIDE program, or stopped for a violation. Slightly over half of online (57%) and in person (55%) respondents reported they had contact with police. Notably, 6% of the respondents from the online survey skipped the question, and 5% of in-person respondents gave no response or did not know.

*Chart 4: Treated with respect*

Respondents who answered yes to the previous question (see Chart 3), then reported if they were treated with respect by police officers or staff during their contact. Of those that answered “yes”, in Chart 3, more than three quarters of these online (81%) and in-person (80%) respondents reported they were treated with respect by the Thunder Bay Police officer or staff person during their contact. Notably, 10% of online respondents skipped this question and 5% of in-person respondents gave no response or did not know.

*Chart 5: Safety of Thunder Bay*

Online (39%) and in-person (31%) respondents perceived that Thunder Bay is somewhat safe. Notably, 9% of online respondents skipped this question and 5% of in-person respondents gave no response or did not know.

**C. Differences**

The next three charts show differences to statements that the TBPS is sensitive to the needs of MY group, treats people fairly, and has confidence in the TBPS.

*Chart 6: Sensitive to the needs of MY group*

The prompt for respondents reads, “Group means the group(s) that you identify with through your ethnicity, race, culture, sexual orientation, religion, etc.”. Nearly half of online respondents (47%) chose ‘strongly agree’; less than a quarter of in-person respondents (24%) chose ‘strongly agree’. Conversely, few online respondents chose ‘strongly disagree’ (9%), while nearly a fifth (18%) of in-person respondents chose ‘strongly disagree’. Notably, 10% of online respondents skipped this question and 9% of in-person respondents gave no response or did not know.

*Chart 7: Treating people fairly*

The prompt for respondents reads, “treating people fairly relates to race, ethnicity, age, gender, or the severity of the offence”. About half of online respondents (52%) perceived that the TBPS did a ‘good job’. In-person respondents (40%) perceived that TBPS did a ‘poor job’ most frequently. Further, 10% of online respondents skipped this question and 15% of in-person respondents gave no response or did not know.

*Chart 7: Confidence in the TBPS*

Slightly more than half of the online respondents (54%) indicated they had ‘a great deal of confidence’ in the Thunder Bay Police Service. Less than half that percentage of in-person respondents (23%) shared this level of confidence, a difference of 31 percentage points. Notably, 9% of online respondents skipped this question and 4% of in-person respondents gave no response or did not know.

In sum, in-person respondents reported lower levels of trust in the TBPS than online peers, by as much as 33 percentage points for treating people fairly. Differences may be attributed to the demographic composition of the samples. The online sample was older and predominantly identified as White while the in-person sample was younger and had a higher percentage of Indigenous respondents. Lower trust and confidence in policing are consistent with past studies of younger and Indigenous peoples [13]. Importantly, lack of trust and confidence may compromise delivery of police services by under-reporting, less cooperation, and perceptions that police officers are indifferent to victims [14].

Potentially, differences also may be attributed to TBPS’ relationships with Indigenous communities, which was amplified during the survey period through the release of two reports [11, 12]. Both McNeilly and Sinclair recommended that the TBPS and its Board act to restore relationships with Indigenous peoples of Thunder Bay and surrounding First Nations communities [11, 12]. The TBPS need to build positive relationships with all groups to restore trust and confidence.

Based on the key findings of the 2018 CSS, researchers recommend that the TBPS:

1. Add focus groups with racialized youth for further insights into how police can enhance trust in policing among youth, particularly racialized youth in the city. The researchers recommend that the TBPS implement this recommendation in the short-term to gain youth perspective on how to improve relationships with them.

2. Repeat the 2018 CSS again in 2019, using both online and in-person formats to see if similarities and differences between samples remain consistent. A 2019 CSS also will allow for comparison nationally to the GSS (2019) on Victimization and RPS’ CSS. The researchers recommend that the TBPS implement this recommendation within the year, conducting the CSS in fall 2019 with a larger sample of in-person respondents.

3. Reach out to organizations to advertise the CSS to more citizens as well as regular visitors to Thunder Bay to gain a more representative sample of respondents to the online survey—in-person surveys are expensive and time consuming. The researchers recommend that the TBPS implement this recommendation in the long-term. The researchers further recommend that the TBPS start reaching out in the short term and employ relational approaches to invite diverse respondents to the CSS. A greater diversity of respondents will reflect the community more accurately and offer broader perspectives.

**Notes**

[1] Thunder Bay Police Service (2014). Community Satisfaction Survey. Personal communication.

Thunder Bay Police Service (2016). Community Satisfaction Survey. Personal communication.

[2] The TBPS advertised its CSS through the following media outlets: Chronicle Journal, Wawatay Communication Society, Acadia Broadcasting, and T.Bay Post Inc.

[3] Census data (2016) for Ontario shows that Thunder Bay has the highest population of Aboriginal peoples (12.7%) in Ontario.

[4] The age ranges for the 2014 and 2016 CSS were 13-17 years, 18-40 years, 41-65 years, and 65 up. For the 2018 CSS the age ranges were adjusted to 18-24 years, 25-30 years, 35-44 years, 45-54 years, 65-74 years, over 75 years. The Research Ethics Boards at Lakehead University requires that survey respondents are 18 years or older. If younger, they need consent from parents or guardians. This study allowed respondents aged 18 or older.

[5] In 2011, Drs. Ruddell and Jones of the Department of Justice Studies at the University of Regina added an in-person format using a snowball method to complement the random telephone surveys conducted for the Regina Police Service’s Citizen Satisfaction Survey. Personal communication.

[6] Trust and confidence questions used by other police services include Ottawa Police Service, Peel Regional Police Service, Regina Police Service, and Vancouver Police Service. Statistics Canada conducts its General Social Survey (GSS) on Victimization every five years, with the last one in 2014. The GSS asks Canadians about their perceptions of their local police services through a standard set of questions (e.g., Are the police in your community easy to talk to and approachable?). It asks questions on trust and confidence.

[7] This quote is from Tyler, 2004, p. 85.

[8] Dr. R. Rudell, Department of Justice Studies, University of Regina conducts the Regina Police Services’ CSS annually. He generously shared six questions from the RPS, which were added to the TBPS’ CSS in 2018. TBPS also used the questions from Statistics Canada’s General Social Survey (GSS) on Victimization. Adding these questions allows the TBPS to compare its results on these questions to respondents to another police service that guided TBPS’ approach (RPS) and to national respondents (GSS) in 2019.

[9] Disqualified respondents include those who: reported being under age 18, and/or indicated that “you or anyone in your household works for the Thunder Bay Police Service”.

[10] Cathy Alex (CBC News) reported on Braiden Jacob’s death and the subsequent homicide investigation. Braiden’s tragic death in 2018 follows nine First Nations youth that had died in Thunder Bay since 2000, as reported by APTN News.

[11] McNeilly, G. (2018, p. 184). McNeilly conducted a systemic review in his role as the Ontario Independent Police Review Director (OIPRD). The review responded to complaints about the TBPS’ investigation into the death of an Indigenous man named Stacey DeBungee.

[12] Sinclair, M. (2018, p. 62). The Ontario Civilian Police Commission (“OCPC”) retained Senator Murray Sinclair to lead the Investigation into the TBPS Board’s oversight of the relationship between the Thunder Bay Police Service (“TBPS”) and the Indigenous community. Sinclair’s investigation responded to concerns raised by First Nations leaders from Nishnawbe Aski Nation, Grand Council Treaty 3, and the Rainy River First Nations about the Thunder Bay Police Services Board’s (“Board”) oversight of police services.
[13] First, researchers find that age is a significant influence on trust in policing. Chow (2011, 2012) examined Canadian high school students. He found students consistently scored low on the general attitudes toward police. Chow’s study finds students held marginally positive attitudes about police, confirming other scholars’ findings (Friedman, Lurigio, Greenleaf, Albertson, 2004; Hurst & Frank, 2000). Second, racialized youth are more likely to have lower trust in policing. Hurst (2007) found trust in policing was greater among white youth (57%) than racialized youth (30%). Thus, age and race are relevant factors in trust in policing (Statistics Canada, 2009).

[14] Tonkiss, Passey, Fenton, & Hems (2000) and Goldsmith (2005) assert that without trust, the delivery of police service to citizens is compromised. Taylor Griffiths & Clark (2017) found that distrust of the police can lead to under-reporting and lack of cooperation with police investigations and the perceptions and experiences that police officers are indifferent to victims.

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